

MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON GROUP RELATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

MEETING WITH

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

November 2, 1959

Present:

Mrs. Mary Burch
Franklyn Titus,
Ass't Supt. of Schools

Al Mark
Dr. Donald Campbell,
Researcher,
Board of Education

Sam Weitzman
Daniel S. Anthony
Walter D. Chambers

On November 2 members of the Commission's Subcommittee on Education met with representatives of the Board of Education to discuss the matter of schools in changing neighborhoods and neighborhoods which are predominantly Negro. This meeting was called at the request of the Commission to explore and investigate certain opinions and allegations concerning the schools which were reported in the Survey, Newark - A City in Transition and which have been reported to the Commission by various citizen groups. These statistics and statements were summarized and presented to the Superintendent with the request for a meeting. This summary served as the agenda for this meeting.

Mr. Titus opened by suggesting that attention be focused on Question #3.

The question reads:

What about charges that facilities (building, classroom materials, etc.) are inadequate in certain areas? Are there any plans to meet any such inadequacies? Is there a priority list determining which areas are in greatest need? Where do certain neighborhoods stand on such a list?

He stated that there are old schools in every area because there is not enough money to take care of the many needs facing the schools today.

Dr. Campbell gave some background information on how recent school construction has kept pace with the large scale apartment building construction, particularly low cost housing. He cited such examples as the Dayton Street

School to relieve the population pressure of Kretschmer Homes, Broadway School near Archbishop Walsh Homes, W. Kinney Jr. High School near Hayes Homes and the Mt. Vernon School which was built to accommodate pupils in the private housing development in Vailsburg. Dr. Campbell noted that close liaison has been maintained between the Housing Authority and the Board of Education in keeping abreast of city redevelopment plans.

Dr. Campbell then gave some information on plans for school construction and reconstruction. Included in these plans are additions to the buildings of S. 8th St., Garfield St. and Sussex Avenue Schools, the conversion of the third floor auditoriums of Avon and Bergen Schools into classrooms, replacement of Monmouth Street School with a 1700 pupil elementary school, a new Jr. High School in the Warren Street area and reconstruction at Robert Treat School.

The question was raised by Samuel Weitzman, "What about plans in private home areas; reports show that schools are inadequate in many of these areas". Mr. Titus stated that recent surveys indicate that there has been an increased school population at Bergen, Avon, Miller and Peshine. He also said that illegal housing occupancy leading to overcrowding has had a serious effect on the school population.

The discussion was then centered on the term "transiency population" which Mr. Titus said characterized some neighborhoods such as Clinton Hill. He cited facts and figures to support the statement that a high degree of transiency exists in certain neighborhoods. The following statistics on transfers were presented on the school year Sept. 1958 - June 1959.

	<u>New students admitted</u>	<u>No. of student transfers</u>
Avon	356	268
Bergen	528	438

For the present school year to Oct. 23, Bergen has 297 new students and transferred 294. These figures show the rates of transfer: Avon, 61.8%; Bergen, 51.9%; Coes Pl., 110%. According to the Board of Education these statistics indicate the high rate of transiency in these areas.

A question was raised as to where these pupils go with these transfers, within or out of the neighborhood, within or out of the city? How do the schools of Clinton Hill compare with other areas and in other years on the matter of transfers and transiency? It was suggested by the Commission that it might be good to trace the pattern of movement in such areas as Clinton Hill. Drs. Titus and Campbell agreed this should be done.

The question was raised as to what about redistricting as a plan to relieve some of the overcrowding in certain areas. Mr. Titus stated that this situation is being studied by Dr. Campbell and himself as to how and when redistricting can be effected. This study is to be completed in January 1960. Tentative plans will make these shifts:

Part of the Avon district to 18th Ave. School

Part of the Peshine district to Chancellor Ave School

Part of the Hawthorne district to Bragaw

It was also reported that the project of developing a light industrial area in the Central Ward will effect the pupil population at Avon, Bergen, Cleveland, 18th Ave. and Waverly Schools. Cleveland and 18th Ave. will especially suffer a severe drop in pupil population. This would make it possible to relieve other school districts where overcrowding exists.

It was noted by Mr. Titus that the schools in Forest Hill and North Newark are accommodating the pupil population. In fact one school in that area, Summer Avenue, has been closed.

The meeting was adjourned with the recommendation that there be a closer relationship between the Board of Education and the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations. Prior to the next meeting within two weeks, Mr. Titus and Dr. Campbell are to be given copies of Volumes I and II of the Survey for their review and study.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter Chambers
Walter D. Chambers

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